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VACAVALLEY RADIO CLUB

VACAVILLE , CALIFORNIA

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December 2013

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the shack
The rig was turned off and the mike cord lay slack.
The antenna rotor had made its last turn,
The tubes in the linear have long ceased to burn.
I sat there relaxing and took off my specs,
Preparing to daydream of armchair DX,
When suddenly outside I heard such a sound,
I dashed out the door to see what was around.
The moon shone down brightly and lighted the night-
For sure, propagation for the low bands was right.
I peered towards the roof where I heard all the racket,
And there was some guy in a red, fur-trimmed jacket.
I stood there perplexed in a manner quite giddy.
Just who was this stranger - di di dah dah di di?
He looked very much like an FCC guy,
Who'd come to check up on some bad TVI.
I shouted to him, "OM, QRZ"
"Hey, you by the chimney, all dressed up in red."
I suddenly knew when I heard sleighbells jingle.
The guy on the rooftop was jolly Kris Kringle.
He had a big sack full of amateur gear,
Which made a big load for a prancing reindeer.
Transmitters, receivers, for cabinets and racks,
Some meters and scopes and a lot of co-ax.
He said not a word 'cause he'd finished his work
He picked up his sack, then he turned with a jerk.
As he leaped to his sleigh, he shouted with glee,
And I knew in a moment he'd be QRT.
But I heard him transmit as he flew o'er the trees
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all seventy-three's."

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Thanks to Skip, AF6HC

This happy looking crew is your your newly elected officers for 2014. From L to R, Art Miller - KI6UXE Chris Jones - KD7TQO Antonio DelRio - N6ZGB 'Skip' Lawson - AF6HC Jerry Olive - KD6WKKY Mike Vieira - W6MAV. Not Shown- Bob Hewitt - K6HEW and -KJ6MIB

Minutes of the November, 2013 meeting

The November meeting of the VVRC was called to order at 19:20 hr. by President Marcus Maclean – KI6WDX. In attendance were five board members, nine members, and two visitors.

There was no financial report due to the treasurer's absence.

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VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB--2013

ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Marcus K. Maclean, KI6WDX
Vice President: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Secretary: Skip Lawson, AF6HC
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director: Skip Lawson, AF6HC
Director: Antonio Del Rio, N6GZB
Director: Arthur Miller, KI6UXE
Director: Richard Craig, KJ6MIB

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Net Control Chairperson: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Club Activities Chairperson: Board of Directors
Newsletter Editor: Jerry Bowen, KJ6SCC
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor: Bob Hewitt,

A motion was made by Mike Vieira – W6MAV, and seconded by Jerry Olive – KD6WKY - to accept the minutes of the October meeting, as posted in the newsletter. This motion was passed.

Jerry – KD6WKY, reminded everyone that Merriment on Main was just around the corner – on Tuesday, Dec. 3rd, and encouraged everyone to go down to the Vacaville Police Dept., and fill out the short local background form, get photographed, and get their badge so that they could participate. Once again – this is being done at NO CHARGE to the membership.

Jerry also reminded the membership that there will be a VE session held at his office on Sat., Dec. 7, at 09:30hr. Cost for the test is $15.00 (exact cash would be very helpful) . The office is located at 1530 Webster St., Fairfield, phone: 422-6777, or you can find directions at www.JerryOlive.com

The next order of business for the evening was the election of officers and board of directors – I.A.W. the VVRC by-laws. Since no nominations were made at the October meeting, it was necessary to make those nominations first.

Nominations were as follows:

President: Kim Ware - KI6JNX
Mike Vieira – W6MAV

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Vice Pres.: Frank Garay - KJ6RWQ
Jerry Olive – KD6WKY
Secretary: 'Skip' Lawson – AF6HC
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt – K6HEW
Board nominations:
Richard Craig – KJ6MIB
Tony DelRio - N6ZGB
Chris Jones - KD7TQO
Art Miller – KI6UXE

IAW the ARRL By-Laws, a secret ballot was made, and the following members were elected to office:
President: Mike Vieira – W6MAV
Vice Pres.: Jerry Olive – KD6WKY
Secretary: 'Skip' Lawson – AF6HC
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt – K6HEW
Directors:
Chris Jones – KD7TQO
Richard Craig – KJ6MIB
Art Miller – KI6UXE
Antonio DelRio – N6ZGB

Congratulations to all of the new Officers and Directors! The last order of business was a brief discussion about the proposed Christmas dinner. Several members suggested that since it was actually getting a little late to be planning something like a dinner – especially at this time of the year when everyone's calendar was filling up with other events, that we just meet at the Hometown Buffet, in Fairfield, since although they do have a meeting room, if wasn't available, it was already approved by the manager to just assemble some tables over in one corner and have a fun social evening, at a reasonable price. Marcus promised to have a final decision out to the membership by the next evening so that they could make final plans.
With nothing else to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.
Respectfully submitted,
Skip Lawson – AF6HC

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

The Vaca Valley Radio Club has proudly served the Northern Solano County Area since 1988. We pride ourselves in providing a friendly place for radio amateurs to meet and improve their operating skills.

We participate in public service events throughout the year and are always ready to assist with communications during times of emergency.

Browsw our website for more information about our club. If you have any questions please e-mail us at w6vvr@w6vvr.net or call 707-448-5665 for assistance

The Repeater is Published by the Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143, An ARRL Affiliated Club. Founded 1987, Chartered 1988. General Meetings: 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM 420 Elmira Fire Station.

Wheelchair accessible

2014 Tuesday Night Net

Jerry Olive, KD6WKY

I want to make sure we're on a doable schedule for the Tuesday night net in the New Year. As your Vice President Elect it is my responsibility to see that the Tuesday night net has a good net control operator that is reliable and knows how to run a friendly net. All of you have this experience and have run the net in the past.

Currently the schedule is as follows: First Tuesday of the month – Jerry Bowen KJ6SCCSecond Tuesday of the month – Richard Craig KJ6MIBThird Tuesday of the month – Chris Jones KD7TQOFourth Tuesday of the month – Marcus Maclean KI6WDXFifth Tuesday of the month – Bob Hewitt K6HEW

Please let me know if you can commit to being a net control operator in your current spot going forward. If you can not or choose not to run the net any longer the sooner you can tell me the better.

Thanks.I am going to update the script for the net control operator to read this month so it is in a format that keeps listeners listening and participating.

One of my goals in the New Year is to get our members that use an HT near the window as a radio upgrade to a better transceiver with an outside antenna.

HT's are for Merriment on Main, not the Tuesday night net.

Another thing I want to try and do is get everyone to use normal amateur radio language on the air and get away from the 11 meter stuff like "my handle is" or "copy that."2014 will be a good year in amateur radio for W6VVR.

Visit the Repeater online courtesy of Bob K6HEW at: vacavalleyradio.net

Club repeater in Vacaville:W6VVR 145.470 MHz(-) pl 127.3
The W6VVR net call is Tuesday evenings at 8pm on the club repeater. All are invited to participate in this weekly meeting on the air. 73!

Additional local repeaters
WV6F 224.200(-)
WV6F 440.025(+)
WV6F 1291.900(-)

THE BIT BUCKET

OK, OK, I know this newsletter is seven days late.

Holidays are a tough time to publish a newsletter because family obligations take precedent and I've had quite a few of those.

For the last twelve days my wife and I were in Arizona, (one of my favorite states) visiting my brother at Golden Valley near Kingman and then our son at Scottsdale. Had a great time except we decided to use the car instead of the RV in order to save on gas costs.

We had to stay in motels for two nights at outrageous prices in Mojave and Needles, California. RV'ing will be my choice from now on!

Congratulations to the new officers of the VacaValley Radio Club that will assume office in January 2014! It should be a productive and fun year with the talented folks who will be taking the helm.

As I write this today it's Pearl Harbor Day and I feel it is important to remember the sacrifices the veterans suffered in World War II

Even at home, there were many parts of everyday life that civilians had to give up to support the men and women overseas. Some of us are old enough to remember our moms living with rationing of food, gas, tires etc. It wasn't easy but they complained little and learned to work the system as well as they could. Women joined the work force in droves because of the lack of "man"power and they accomplished their work with gusto. Remember those "Rosie the Riveter" posters?

Ham radio was restricted in many ways but the armed forces had a ready made experienced force that quickly volunteered and were put to good use both in communications and electronic improvements.

For decades to come our lives have improved greatly but lately one has to wonder.

Complaining and rudeness seems to be the thing to do today but not so much about solving the problems complained about.

One can only hope that the new generation can get their collective noses away from their cell phones long eneough yo learn from the past and do all they can to improve their own lives as well as others..

NET CONTROL OPERATORS

1st week of month-Jerry Bowen; KJ6SCC
2nd week of month-Richard Craig; KJ6MIB
3rd week of month-Chris Jones; KD7TQO
4th week of month-Marcus MacLean; KI6WDX
On months with 5 weeks-Bob Hewitt; K6HEW

YOTA

During December several European countries will promote ham radio to youth as part of a Youngsters On The Air (YOTA) event, on all bands and modes. Stations will be on the air with "YOTA" as a call sign suffix or appendage.

"The idea for this is to break the ice for some youngsters," said Bjorn Dettmaring, ON5CFG. "This is *not* a contest but a shout out to the world of ham radio. Try to get as many youngsters as you can on the air this month," he urged.

Awards are available for operators or SWLs working or monitoring YOTA stations. Dettmaring said the December event follows up on the success of the Youngsters On The Air events last summer. Awards are free and will be distributed electronically. Only contacts during December 2013 are valid. Each station may be counted only one time. — *Thanks to Bjorn Dettmaring, ON5CFG*

When radio communication took to the air during WWI

By Dave Trojan, Aviation Historian,
davidtrojan@earthlink.net

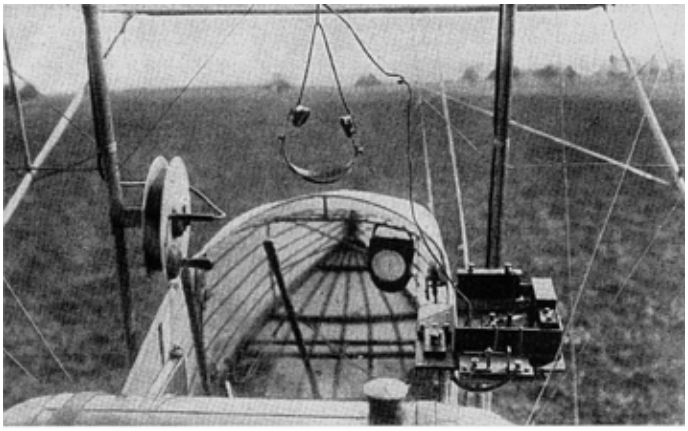
WWI pilot with wireless radio communication system, photo from Cradle of Aviation Museum

Did World War one aircraft use radio communication? A number of different systems were tried; some were more successful than others. Beginning with the radio telegraph and ending with the radio telephone, aircraft wireless communication systems demonstrated their value during the war. Both underwent tremendous development during the war and the American contribution to such development was very important. Two of the most widely used airplane radio communication systems, were the SCR-65 Telegraph Transmitting Set and the SCR-68 Radio Telephone System.

World War One aircraft proved their ability as an observation platform by flying over enemy positions and reporting on enemy troop movements. The problem was the time lag between when the information was obtained until it was delivered to a ground unit. Several methods were tried until a breakthrough in air to ground communication occurred in late 1914 when the British began experimenting with airborne wireless telegraph equipment.

Initially known as wireless telegraphy, spark-gap technology of the era had some major drawbacks. Wireless telegraphy used Morse code transmitted by electromagnetic waves instead of wires. The discharge of a spark across a gap caused by the pressing of a telegraph key generated the electromagnetic waves that relayed the message. From a security standpoint, a spark transmission could not be tuned; it covered a span of frequencies and could be intercepted by anyone with a receiver. Moreover, the signals of all stations within range of each other caused mutual interference. Not only did the noisy spark create a great deal of distortion, the consequent dissipation of energy over the broad band of frequencies lessened the distance over which the signals could travel.

However even with these drawbacks, British

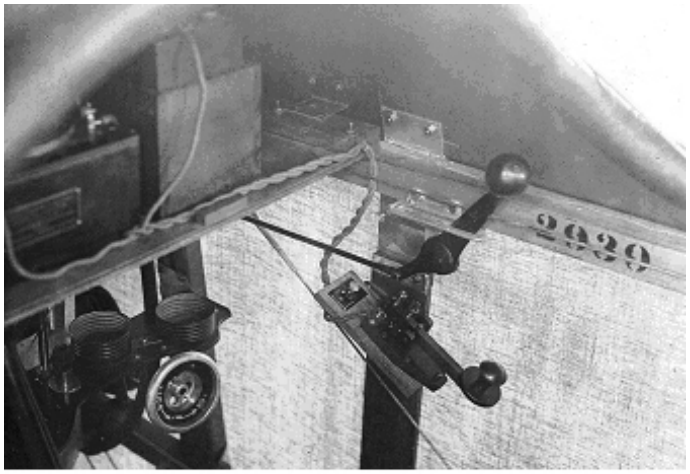


Early WWI radio telegraph equipment installed on reconnaissance aircraft, photo courtesy monoskop.org

mechanics began to add wireless telegraph equipment to front line aircraft by 1915. In the beginning, only the wireless transmitters were installed in the two-seat reconnaissance aircraft because the equipment was so heavy and bulky. The first airborne spark gap/Morse code transmitters were developed by the Sterling Telephone Company for the Royal Naval Air Service. The transmitters were enclosed in a box to prevent a spark from igniting petrol vapor in the cockpit. To obtain a clear signal the aircraft had to descend to an altitude below 5000 ft. A wire antenna on a reel had to be wound out by the observer and dangled below the plane to enable transmissions to be sent. Power was provided by a wind powered accumulator mounted on the plane.

The U.S. Army Signal Corps further developed the wireless telegraph transmitter system. The SCR-65 Airplane Transmitter was the first type designed specifically for use in U.S. aircraft. It was used aboard aircraft for one way communication to U.S. ground troops who were picking up the transmissions with their BC-14A and SCR-54A crystal receivers. The SCR designation originally stood for “Set, Complete, Radio” but later signified “Signal Corps Radio”. It was patterned after the British Stirling transmitter, which was used almost exclusively by the British Royal Flying Corps. The SCR-65 radio transmitter was manufactured for the United States Signal Corps by the Connecticut Telephone & Electric Company.

Radio Telegraph Transmitting Set, SCR-65, photo courtesy cecomhistorian.armylive.dodlive.mil

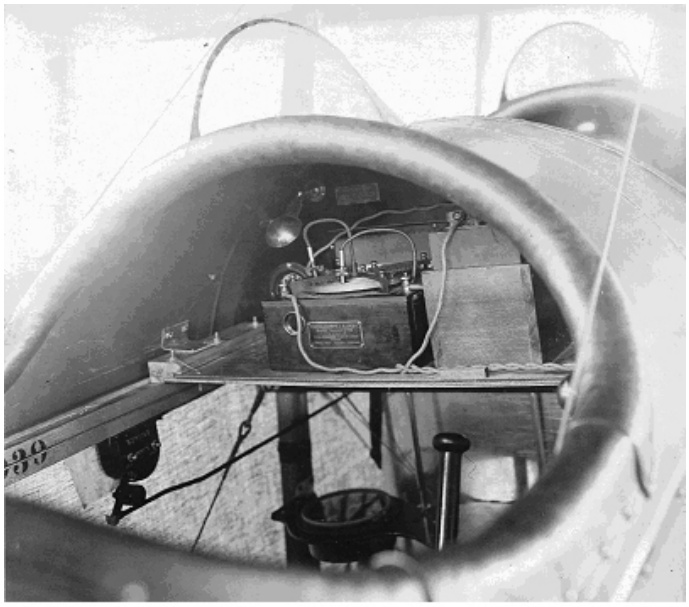


Telegraph Key mounted in airplane cockpit at Hazelhurst Field, New York, photo from Cradle of Aviation Museum

The SCR-65 was a tuned spark coil (gap/ Morse code) transmitting set and produced damped waves over a range of wave lengths from 100 to 300 meters (1000-3000 KC). It had a sending range of approximately 12 to 15 miles, although greater distances were achieved, especially from airplanes at considerable heights above the ground. The principal parts consisted of an ordinary spark coil, mica condenser; open spark gap, adjustable vibrator, and spiral pancake inductance coil mounted on the lid. Mounted on the hard-rubber panel on the top of the box were four binding posts marked antenna, counterpoise (ground), key, and battery. Two flexible leads pass up through the panel and attach to the spiral at any desired points by ingenious clips. A window on one side allowed for viewing of the spark gap to verify operation. The wireless telegraph system used a long 120-150 foot wire counterpoise antenna on a hand reel which had to be wound out by the observer and dangled below the plane to enable transmissions to be sent.

In some types of aircraft, the SCR-65 was secured to a tray, together with a battery type BB-11, 8 volt, 10 ampere hour capacity. The tray was then slid into place behind the pilot's seat in the fuselage. This configuration allowed for quick servicing of the equipment.

A wind powered accumulator was mounted on an airplane wing . It provided an output of 30-40 watts of power for the airborne wireless equipment.



Signal Corps, U.S. Army, Radio Telegraph Transmitting Set, TYPE SCR 65, installed in aircraft at Hazelhurst Field, New York for testing and training, photo from Cradle of Aviation Museum

Antenna reel installed on the side of a Jenny at Hazelhurst Field, New York, photo from Cradle of Aviation Museum

Many problems were reported when using the airborne Morse code equipment. Morse code was a slow method of communication when used for relying

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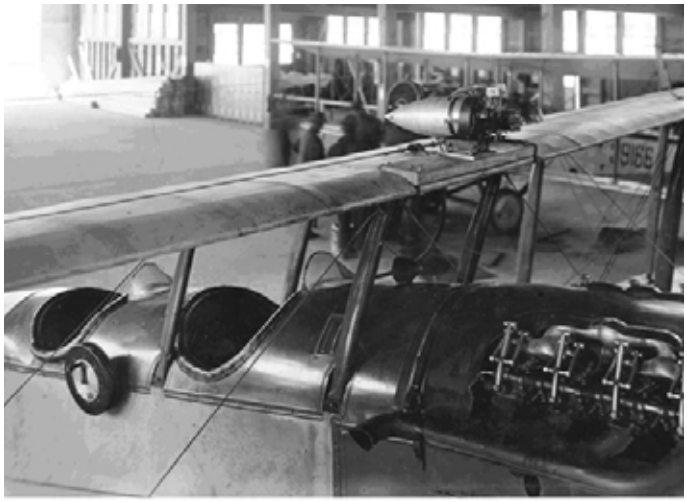

Wind powered accumulator mounted on airplane wing. It provided an output of 30-40 watts of power for the airborne wireless equipment, photo from Cradle of Aviation Museum

complex observations. A skilled observer could only send messages at a rate of up to 12 words per minute. The airborne wireless Morse code machines worked too near the front lines and thus too close to each other causing interference. It was reported that the Royal Flying Corps had to locate their wireless sets at least 1500 yards away from the trench sets to avoid jamming in 1918. Other problems included the use of the same type of wireless sets throughout the squadrons that resulted in jamming. Insufficient differences in wave lengths caused garbled signals between transmitters. Signals were often sent that were too long and cumbersome and sent without breaks for long periods.

Despite all the problems, wireless telegraphy was widely employed by both sides during WWI. However, many flyers were not too impressed with the airborne communication systems at this early period and many had the equipment removed to reduce weight.

They continued to rely upon hand-written messages dropped to the ground. Nonetheless, the benefits offered by this crude method of communication revolutionized air reconnaissance. The 'spotting' of the fall of artillery shells and then telegraphing a message in Morse code to a receiving station near the artillery battery for adjustment of the artillery fire was a major advancement in warfare.

Only with advances in continuous wave technology and the development of vacuum tubes made wireless voice transmission possible. Wireless telegraphy evolved into wireless telephony. By 1917, the British Royal Flying Corps (RFC) began to equip planes with air-to-air continuous wave voice radio.

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VACAVALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Please Print & Fill in Completely Dues are delinquent January 1st

Name: _____ Call Sign_____

Street:
_____

City: _____Zip:
_____

Phone: (_____) _____-_____OK to Publish ?(_____)

License Class: _____ ARRL Member ?(_____)

E-Mail
Address_____

FAMILY Member (Spouse or Children)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

MEMBER Dues	$20.00	
Each Family Member	$ 2.00	
Student	$ 5.00	
Repeater/Autopatch donation		
Call/Name badge	$11.00	

Optional ARRL membership

ARRL dues	$37.00	
Total		

Paid by CASH: Check #

DATE: _____

Mail to : Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143